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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/623,030	07/18/2003	Kimberly D. Anderson	KCC-4985 (K-C 19691)	4469
321 7590 03/19/2008 SENNIGER POWERS LLP ONE METROPOLITAN SQUARE 16TH FLOOR ST LOUIS, MO 63102				
EXAMINER KIDWELL, MICHELE M				
ART UNIT		PAPER NUMBER		
3761				
NOTIFICATION DATE		DELIVERY MODE		
03/19/2008		ELECTRONIC		

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

The time period for reply, if any, is set in the attached communication.

Notice of the Office communication was sent electronically on above-indicated "Notification Date" to the following e-mail address(es):

uspatents@senniger.com

Office Action Summary

Application No.

10/623,030

Applicant(s)

ANDERSON ET AL.

Examiner

Michele Kidwell

Art Unit

3761

Period for Reply -- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 12/20/07.
- 2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-18 and 20-36 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1-18 and 20-36 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- 1) ☐ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
- 2) ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
- 3) ☐ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-8508)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____
- 4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____
- 5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application
- 6) ☐ Other: _____

DETAILED ACTION

Allowable Subject Matter

The indicated allowability of claims 1 – 18 and 33 – 36 is withdrawn in view of the following references. Rejections based on the references follow.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

The text of those sections of Title 35, U.S. Code not included in this action can be found in a prior Office action.

Claims 1-13, 15 – 18 and 20-36 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Yeo (US 5,503,076) in view of Dispoto et al. (US 4,680,645).

Regarding claims 1-3, 15, and 17-18:Yeo discloses a multi-color printed nonwoven web laminate 10 or any other type of substrate layer (column 4, lines 8-11, column 5, lines 29-34) for use in an outer cover of absorbent personal care products such as diapers and incontinence garments (column 1, lines 12-14 and column 7, lines 52-57) comprising a fibrous, absorbent facing layer/overlay 12 and substrate layer/additional other component 14, and an image including at least one ink having the color of red, blue, and green 16a, 16b, 16c and inherently black [Note that the primary colors red, blue, green when mixed form black] as set forth in column 4, lines 8-16 and figure 1.

While, Yeo discloses the image being printed in a non-contact manner via flexographic or ink-jet printing for good print pattern definition (column 8, lines 49-52) and the laminate in one embodiment being printed at a line speed of approximately 100 feet per minute (column 10, lines 39-42), the examiner contends that the manner in which the image is printed (i.e. a non contact manner) is considered as a product by process limitation that does not provide a patentable distinction between the claimed invention and the prior art.

Yeo does not expressly disclose the colored inks coverage percentage area values. However, coverage percentages are a well-known result effective variable since they are a result of the overall article size on which the color is printed.

Thus it would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to modify Yeo with the color coverage values for optimum image performance, since it has been held that discovering an optimum value of a result effective variable involves only routine skill in the art. In re Boesch and Slaney, 617 F. 2d 272, 205 USPQ 215 (CCPA 1980).

Yeo further does not expressly disclose an image resolution of 100 dpi.

Dispoto discloses images on paper made with a resolution of 100 dpi resulting in an excellent quality image free of image artifacts (column 1, lines 6-10, column 2, lines 53-64).

One would be motivated to modify the image of Yeo to have the resolution of Dispoto for an excellent quality image since the references disclose printing images on substrates. Therefore, it would be obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time

the invention was made to modify the article image, thus providing a resolution of 100 dpi.

Regarding claims 4-7: Yeo further discloses the facing layer/outer cover 12 comprises a white background (which inherently is formed via the loading of fibers with titanium dioxide which produces a white color) on which an image such as stars and hearts is printed (column 5, lines 12-16 and figures I and 3).

Regarding claims 8-9 Yeo further discloses the .image includes a separable design element having a periphery and interior, the interior being free of black ink shading and the design element outlined in black ink (figure 3).

Regarding claim 10 Yeo further discloses the image being printed in a non- contact manner via flexographic or ink-jet printing for good print pattern definition as discussed above with respect to claim 1, the image inherently being printed with the highest threshold of blank ink in order to maximize the image quality.

Regarding claims 11-12 Yeo further discloses a focal element 16b for example (figure 1). Yeo/Dispoto does not expressly disclose the dimensions of the design elements. The design elements are result effective variables since they are a result of the number of designs placed on the substrate. It would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to modify Yeo/Dispoto with design elements dimensions, since it has been held that discovering an optimum value of a result effective variable involves only routine skill in the art. In re Boesch and Slaney, 617 F. 2d 272, 205 USPQ 215 (CCPA 1980).

Regarding claim 13 Yeo discloses water-based inks that may include wax additives

(column 6, lines 53-60 and column 7, lines 39-44).

Regarding claim 16 Yeo/Dispoto do not expressly disclose a color difference value (DE*). Color difference is a result effective variable since it is dependent on the change in lightness and change in chroma as disclosed by Applicant (page 21, paragraph 0049). It would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to modify Yeo/Dispoto with the color difference values for optimum image performance, since it has been held that discovering an optimum value of a result effective variable involves only routine skill in the art. In re Boesch and Slaney, 617 F. 2d 272, 205 USPQ 215 (CCPA 1980). Furthermore, when the reference discloses all the limitations of a claim except a property or function (i.e.: does not expressly disclose the color difference values), and the examiner cannot determine whether or not the reference inherently possesses properties which anticipate or render obvious the claimed invention but has basis for shifting the burden of proof to applicant as in In re Fitzgerald, 619 F.2d 67, 205 USPQ 594 (CCPA 1980). See MPEP § § 2112- 2112.02.

Regarding claims 20-22 and 30 Yeo discloses the separable design element is outlined in black as discussed above with respect to claims 1 and 10-12.

Regarding claims 23-26 see the discussion above with respect to claims 1 and 4-

Regarding claims 27-29 see the discussion above with respect to claims 13-15.

Regarding claims 31-32 see the discussion above with respect to claims 17-18.

Regarding claim 33 see the discussion above with respect to claims 1 and 16.

Regarding claims 34 – 36 see col. 4, lines 8 – 22 and col. 8, line 66 to col. 9, line 10. The examiner notes that the manner in which the ink is applied is considered

functional. Yeo discloses the use of ink jet printing as does the applicant. In light of such, the examiner contends that the device of Yeo is fully capable of performing the recited function.

Claim 14 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Yeo (US 5,503,076) in view of Dispoto et al. (US 4,680,645), and further in view of Schleinz et al. (US 5,612,118).

Yeo/Dispoto do not expressly disclose the outer cover material that is the printing substrate is made of an extensible material.

Schleinz discloses absorbent training pant 20 with absorbent at crotch section, liquid permeable liner and elastic outer cover 42 for improved elasticity throughout the pant body, the outer cover having an outer surface 44 with a plurality of printed graphics 46 thereon (column 3, lines 52-58, column 4, lines 21-23, figure 1).

One would be motivated to modify the outer cover of Yeo/Dispoto with the extensible outer cover of Schleinz for improved elasticity throughout the pant body since both references disclose disposable absorbent articles having graphics printed on the outer cover.

Therefore, it would be obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to modify the outer cover, thus providing an elastic and extensible outer cover.

Response to Arguments

Applicant's arguments with respect to claims 1 – 18 and 20 – 36 have been fully reconsidered but they are not persuasive.

The applicant's arguments filed June 29, 2007 are found non persuasive because the applicant's arguments are directed toward functional limitations. The applicant is reminded that a recitation of the intended use of the claimed invention must result in a structural difference between the claimed invention and the prior art in order to patentably distinguish the claimed invention from the prior art. If the prior art structure is capable of performing the intended use, then it meets the claim.

The applicant discloses that ink jet printing produces the claimed results. Similarly, Yeo discloses the use of ink jet printing for applying images to substrates. When the prior art device is the same as a device described in the specification for carrying out the claimed method, it can be assumed the device will inherently perform the claimed process. See MPEP 2112.02.

Likewise, the applicant argues the coverage area ratios, however, these ratios occur under specific conditions (i.e., when a specific color is present and/or is applied at a maximum threshold). As previously discussed, both the instant application and the reference disclose the use of ink jet printing to apply the image and therefore, one could reasonably presume that the disclosure of Yeo would be fully capable of performing the recited function. Further, any image in the area may be compared to any and/or all other portions of the article in order to meet the claimed limitation.

The examiner maintains the rejection of claims 11 – 12 as the design elements and the subsequent dimensions are a direct result of the number of designs placed on the substrate and/or the type of garment being produced. In light of such, the dimensions may be considered as result effective variables and would be obvious to

modify based on the intended use of the product.

As to the applicant's remarks regarding uniform dot sizes, the examiner contends that the claimed limitations are functional; however, the applicant's remarks do not appear to be commensurate with the scope of the claims. The claim requires the dots as a whole to produce a uniform volume of ink. As discussed by applicant, Dispoto seeks to correct areas in gray-scaling which, in turn, produces a more uniform product. In turn, the examiner contends that the dots of Dispoto as a whole provide a uniform volume of ink.

A shortened statutory period for reply to this final action is set to expire **THREE MONTHS** from the mailing date of this action. In the event a first reply is filed within **TWO MONTHS** of the mailing date of this final action and the advisory action is not mailed until after the end of the **THREE-MONTH** shortened statutory period, then the shortened statutory period will expire on the date the advisory action is mailed, and any extension fee pursuant to 37 CFR 1.136(a) will be calculated from the mailing date of the advisory action. In no event, however, will the statutory period for reply expire later than **SIX MONTHS** from the date of this final action.

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Michele Kidwell whose telephone number is 571-272-4935. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday thru Friday.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Tatyana Zalukaeva can be reached on 571-272-1115. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is

Art Unit: 3761

571-273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free). If you would like assistance from a USPTO Customer Service Representative or access to the automated information system, call 800-786-9199 (IN USA OR CANADA) or 571-272-1000.

/Michele Kidwell/
Primary Examiner, Art Unit 3761